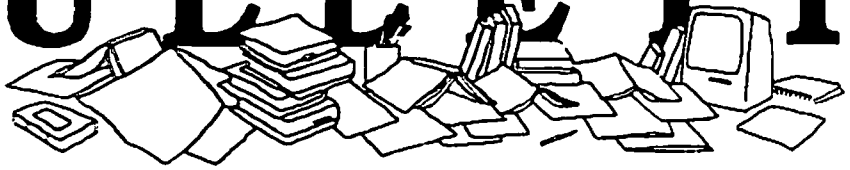
THE LITERACY MATERIALS

BULLETIN



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Fall 2000

• instructors • tutors • learners • administrators • coordinators • resource centres • learning centres •

Welcome to another *Bulletin*. We have news! The *Bulletin* will be managed by Literacy BC starting in September. We are looking forward to this change, hoping it will mean that we can do this job a little more efficiently (and without costs going up - as they tend to do) and ensure that even more people find out about and receive the *Bulletin*.

We are also looking for new members! Love of new materials, a group of fundamental learners to field-test with, and some volunteer time are the requirements. The advantages are some new resources to try out twice a year and a great group of literacy practitioners to work with. We learn a lot from each other as we discuss how we use materials. If you are interested, contact me. We add people to the committee based on what they have to bring and what geographic areas and program types we need to have represented.

Our last meeting included a discussion of editing for correctness and "voice." For example, when learners write, they often use phrases like "I seen" and "I done." By standard English these are, of course, incorrect; but if you ask the learners, or just listen to their speech, that is exactly how they would say it. The correct form sounds odd to them. To me, this is part of the elusive quality known as "voice." Sometimes this would be called dialect. Our problem is — what do we do about it? Some learners, when asked, want to be "correct", and others want their writing left alone! Should the *Bulletin* and other publications in the literacy field "correct" these "errors"?

Another factor is that since the instructors want any incorrect structures edited out of their work, are we being patronizing if we leave errors in learner writing? There is also the grey area of looking "professional" and being a creditable magazine. Do inconsistencies from review to review bring down the quality of the publication? We are interested in hearing from you. What have you done in these situations?

Help on this issue has come from Iris Strong, guest reviewer, Joanna Lord, secretary and desktopper, and Arleigh Trail, proofreader. You are a wonderful team to work with. Thank you.

The Literacy Materials Committee

Evelyn Battell
Malaspina University-College, Duncan
(250) 746-3500

Debbie Booth-Johnson
Victoria READ Society
(250) 727-3938

Joyce Cameron
Douglas College
(604) 527-5416

Ruth Chambers
Okanagan University College, Kelowna
(250) 762-5445

Rena Neufeld
School District #91, Fort St. James
(250) 996-7712

Nancy Ross
Northwest Community College, Terrace
(250) 635-6511

Jan Weiten
Vancouver Community College, Vancouver
(604) 871-7503

Resource Members

Arlee Schmidt
Douglas College

Linda Mitchell
Literacy BC, toll free in BC
1-800-663-1293

Richard Van Camp
Heiltsuk College, Waglisa
(250) 957-2141

Title:	***Too Scared to Learn—Women, Violence and Learning***
Author:	Jenny Horsman, website address: www.jennyhorsman.com
Publisher:	McGilligan Books, 1999 PO Box 16024, 859 Dundas Street West, Toronto, ON M6J 1W0, phone (416) 538-0945 or fax (416) 538-0547 email: mcgilbks@idirect.com
Available:	Your local bookstore
ISBN:	0-9698064-8-5
Price:	$24.95
Reviewer:	Jan Weiten, Instructor

Too Scared to Learn— Women, Violence and Learning

Too Scared to Learn is a thoughtful and thought-provoking examination of the impact that current levels of violence against women in our society have on the survivor in the context of literacy learning. For many of us, as for the literacy practitioners and counsellors that Horsman interviewed in her research, this is one fact that our guts know even better than our minds. Horsman's book is special because of the way in which it is written and also the message that it conveys. Horsman has communicated with, as she says, an "enormous number of people all over Canada," and she has accomplished the extremely difficult task of honouring those diverse voices by using many quotes from correspondence and conversations. This creates a chorus of depth and honesty that is impossible to ignore.

Horsman's book is aimed primarily at educators in the literacy field. One of the most interesting things about the book, for me, was the discussion about redefining survivors of abuse as "canaries in the mine" - warning our society of the toxicity of violence - rather than as victims with behaviour problems who need help returning to "normal."

Another useful aspect of Horsman's book is that it gives practical suggestions gathered from many sources for how we, as literacy practitioners, can help to make the learning environment a safer, more inclusive one for those who have been traumatised by violence. She outlines methods that most, if not all, educators could use to help make the prevalence of violence visible, to recognise and honour the learner's need to move in and out of "presence," and to set up opportunities for learners to take control of their learning environment.

I also read with relief and appreciation the discussion pertaining to the "instructor as counsellor" and the costs of "bearing witness." This part of *Too Scared to Learn* typifies what, for me, is one of the most important features of the book; it engaged me in the debate, rather than merely allowing me to passively observe an academic discourse.

From *Too Scared to Learn—Women, Violence and Learning* by Jenny Horsman. Reproduced by permission of McGilligan Books.

Sample Page

The goal for literacy learning may not be for every learner to be completely present, but rather to find middle ground where sufficient presence allows continued learning over time and remembering the work later. Being aware of the degree of presence and whether it is sufficient for the task is an important aspect of middle ground.

Presence and Possibilities for Learning

If "spacing out" is named as something many learners will struggle with as they seek to learn literacy, and if the classroom is a place which is accepting and supportive of the variety of challenges learners will be facing, then rather than having to be ashamed of spacing out and trying to hide it — their likely school experience — learners can try to become more aware and conscious of what is happening for them. The instructor and the group can learn to work together to enhance possibilities for the presence of all learners, as well as the instructor.

A first challenge for learners may be recognizing when they are more or less present; becoming aware of why, and what situations contribute to their ability to be present, and what situations lead to greater "distance." A learner might then want to start assessing what amount of presence or distance works for her, and what amount stops her literacy learning. Would she be able to learn better if she were more present? Does she want to learn to stay more present? Students might be encouraged to think about their own lives, examine what is going on generally for them. Are there crises in their lives? Are they having nightmares and trouble sleeping? Or are they well-rested and full of energy for class? Do they want to, or can they, make changes in their lives that would help them be more present? Do they want to explore their experience of "absence"? As an individual, a learner might want to decide whether there are any changes to be made in her own life, and what she needs to permit her to be present enough to engage in learning.

The whole class, including the instructor, could look at how the learning situation or program functions and assess whether there are changes which might help many learners to be more present, or to lose less ground in their learning during times they are less present. They might reflect on the class itself. How comfortable are they feeling in the class, physically and emotionally? Does the topic interest them? Are they relaxed? Anxious? Panicked? Has something in the classroom made it hard to stay present? Is something connecting them to early trauma? As psychologist Heather Bain pointed out:

> It could be really minor, it could be the tone of a voice, it could be a school bell, it could be the quality of light on a particular day. (Interview, Edmonton, December, 1996)

Are there factors which might help make the place seem safe, the people trustworthy? It is crucial the program take responsibility for the classroom situation. Is the situation as safe as possible? What sort of "triggers" — actions or events that prompt past coping strategies — are present? Triggers might include loud arguments, men who "tease," are abusive or make sexualized comments. The tone in the classroom might be too much like school, or generally disrespectful. Some women might find it helpful if the room is less like a traditional classroom.

Title:	***My Deaf Son***
Author:	Umtal Nisa
Publisher:	Gatehouse Books Ltd., 1998
Available:	Peppercorn Books & Press, Inc. PO Box 693, Snow Camp, NC USA 27349 phone (336) 574-1634 fax (336) 376-9099
ISBN:	0-906253-57-8
Price:	$5.00 U.S. plus shipping
Reviewer:	Arlee Schmidt, Learner

My Deaf Son

This is a very nice story about a little deaf boy and his family, and how they learned to deal with his deafness. He took special music classes. In class there was an inflatable bed that helped the deaf children to feel the music through the vibrations. They felt the music, and they moved to the vibration. He soon learned how to sign, so he could communicate with his family and friends.

Some students liked *My Deaf Son* because it was easy to read, and the clear drawings of the people in the book helped the students follow along. The book helped them to understand a little about deaf children and their families.

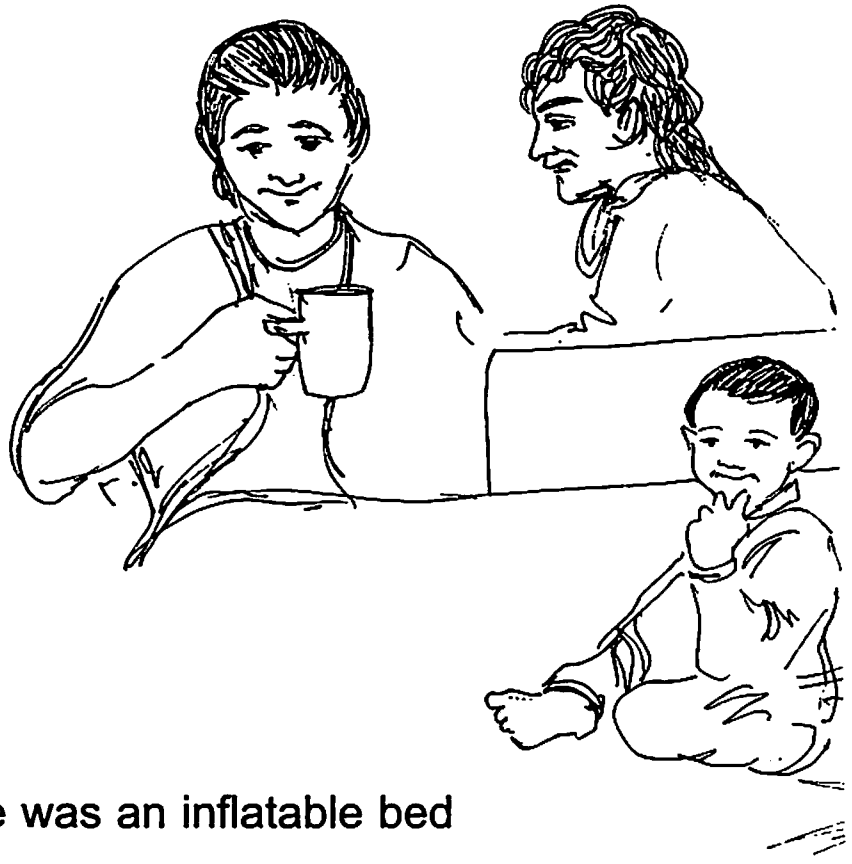
Another learner liked this story because it was nice to learn about sign language. Learning sign language could help a lot of people. Another student liked the part where the mom was very happy when she attended a meeting with his teachers. They told her that her son was doing very well in math, science and English. This would be a good book to do in class with open discussion.

A student from Vancouver liked this book because it made her think about the life of the deaf child and his family. She is very glad to see the mother is participating in her son's handicap by taking him to the special music classes.

I liked this book because it was a very pleasant story about the deaf child and his family, and how they helped him to learn to deal with being deaf. This story is set in two languages, English and Urdu. Our sample page shows the English and, in the book, the facing page has the Urdu print. The writing is easy to read, but the people's names are hard to read. This is a very short book. It is only twenty-eight pages. So overall, this story is very good, and I would recommend this book to anyone.

From *My Deaf Son* by Umtul Nisa. Reproduced by permission of Peppercorn Books & Press Inc.

Sample Page



There was an inflatable bed
which helped deaf children.
They could feel the music
through the vibration.
When they felt the music
they moved.

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Title:	***The New Baby***
Author:	Helen Brain
Publisher:	New Readers Project, 1998
Available:	Peppercorn Books & Press, Inc. PO Box 693, Snow Camp, NC USA 27349 phone (336) 574-1634 fax (336) 376-9099
ISBN:	1-86840-294-0
Price:	$7.00 U.S. plus shipping
Reviewer:	Rena Neufeld, Instructor

The New Baby

The New Baby is a rich and moving story told in beautifully simple words and lovely illustrations. It is the story of a priest and his wife who are ashamed to learn that their daughter is pregnant. When the baby arrives, attitudes and feelings change.

The language in the book is readable for beginning literacy students; the ideas presented are profound. Each page contains one or two sentences in large print; the facing page contains a black and white hand-drawn illustration.

The students who read this book said that it evoked emotions and feelings of sadness, compassion, happiness and love. This is a remarkable feat, considering the entire text contains less than 200 words.

The teachers who used this book described it as an awesome, powerful, lovely book; one that should be in every classroom. Because its language is simple, but its message profound, this book lends itself easily to lessons and activities for any reading level.

Teachers used this book successfully to teach conversation, writing, and comprehension. Some examples of activities include "retelling" the story orally or in writing, mixing up the illustrations and having students put them in the order of the story, and allowing the students to share experiences from their own yes that may have caused similar emotions.

This simple story seemed to touch everyone who read it in a deep and meaningful way. A student from Nanaimo writes, "What I felt when I started reading this book was sadness, compassion for the seventeen year old girl. I found it sad that the girl's parents had the nerve to say that she brought shame to her family. I felt compassion for the girl when the father (priest) wouldn't talk to his daughter for seven months."

The ending of this story is as happy and, importantly, as believable as the beginning is tragic. Read it and share it with your students!

For seven months he would not talk to her. "I want nothing to do with her," he told me. "She has brought shame on our family."

From *The New Baby* by Helen Brain. Reproduced by permission of Peppercorn Books. This page is reduced to 85% of its original size.

Sample Page

Title:	*Net Cards*
Created by:	Jackie Hamlett
Publisher:	Lake County Literacy Program, 1999
Available:	Carol Morris, Lake County Literacy Program Waukegan Public Library 128 N. County St., Waukegan, IL USA 60085 http://nsn.nslsilus.org/wkkhome/adult/Netcards.htm or: cmorris@nslsilus.org
Price:	$25.00 US plus $2.00 shipping for a set of 25 cards
Reviewer:	Evelyn Battell, Instructor

Net Cards

So you'd like to take the learners out on the World Wide Web! You might think that it would take a few hours to prepare the lesson. Well, *Net Cards* are a short-cut to get you started.

Net Cards are index-sized cards with an Internet address, a description of the site, and a few activities to do while visiting the site. Learners enjoy the cards because they cut through a lot of the confusion of the surfing the net. Instructors like the cards because they are tiny, ready-made lessons.

Like any work on the internet, the better your equipment, the faster the process, but even on very old equipment, these cards are fun and educational. Learners need to know how to enter an address and what the back key does. Other than that, it just involves reading the cards and following the links on the screen. The sites have been chosen partly for their easy reading level, and I found that even beginning readers can find and follow links on the net since they are often accompanied by pictures.

The cards include addresses on many topics including eagles, wolves, baseball, cars, learner writing, recipes, outer space, and volcanoes. There are addresses where they can watch videos, look at pictures, play games, or take virtual trips.Assignments on the cards include retrieving information, printing out pictures and writing starts. Learners say "Wow" a lot and are keen to take home the information and/or pictures they print out.

Net Cards are developed in the U.S., so some of them are not interesting to Canadian students. However, many sites such as Old Paw's Fishing Page include Canadian information. I found that the cards led me finally to take advantage of the many other places I see possible URL addresses presented: *Literacy BC Newsletter*, the *Movement for Canadian Literacy Newsletter*, and, of course, NALD.

From *Net Cards*. Reproduced by permission of Lake County Literacy Program.

Sample Page

Meals For You
http://www.mealsforyou.com/

Greatest recipe site on the net! Has all kinds of recipes. Some are low fat, quick and easy, by ingredient, by course, and so much more! You can surf here for hours!

Things to Do:

- ⇨ Find a recipe that you have been looking for. Just type in the category like rolls, dessert or meat.
- ⇨ Print out the recipe you find.
- ⇨ Bring in a recipe you really like and share it with your class or tutor.

The Eagle's Nest
http://www.eaglesnest.com/eagles/

Great site to learn about eagles.

Things to Do:

- ⇨ Before you begin, write down two questions you have about eagles.
- ⇨ Click on the links for *Bald Eagles* and *Golden Eagles*.
- ⇨ Click on the link for *Parental Care*.
- ⇨ Look back at the questions you wrote down. Did you answer them? If so, write down your answers.
- ⇨ Click on *Bald Eagles*. Click on the picture and copy it. (Minimize the browser). Paste it in the word processor.
- ⇨ Type your questions and answers. Print them out.

Title:	***The Inuksuk Book***
Author:	Mary Wallace
Publisher:	Owl Books, Greey de Pencier Books Inc., 1999
	70 The Esplanade, Suite 400, Toronto, ON M5E 1R2
	phone (416) 304-0702 fax (416) 360-8745
Available:	Your local bookstore
ISBN:	1-895688-90-6 (bound) $19.95
	1-895688-91-4 (pbk.) $12.95
Reviewer:	Nancy Ross, Instructor

The Inuksuk Book

The Inuksuk Book is a beautifully illustrated book that describes the many types and uses of *inuksuit*—plural of *inuksuk*—meaning "things that can act in the place of a human being." The *inuksuk* most familiar to us would probably be the *inunnguaq*, "that which looks like a person." In fact, garden catalogues now offer to sell you one for your garden! In the Arctic, however, these stone markers were some of the most important things made by the Inuit and could be used in many ways. Five of the most important were: to show the way when travellers were a long way from home; to warn of very dangerous places; to show where food was stored; to show where a significant thing happened and where people should be respectful; and to act as helpers for hunting caribou.

In discussing each of these uses, readers are also treated to an introduction to the way of life of the Inuit and the North, especially the new territory of Nunavut. Glorious artwork and photography adorn every page, with incredible colours—the blues and purples of water, ice, and sky, and the intense oranges and yellows of the Arctic sunset. Photographs of the Arctic landscape are provided throughout the book, with many examples of *inuksuk*, as well as descriptions of Inuit life, in the present and from earlier times. The book ends with several pages describing and showing, with photographs, how you could build your own *inuksuk*.

Although some of the vocabulary in *The Inuksuk Book* is quite advanced for many readers, even struggling readers loved this book. Some of the difficulty comes with the Inukitut words used, but this is supported with a glossary at the end of the 60-page book. Most importantly, though, the illustrations and photography are so interesting and appealing that most students are inspired to read through to the end. One student commented that "it is most delightful to know that the Inuit had such an interesting life." I would recommend this book as a wonderful addition to your collection for adult students.

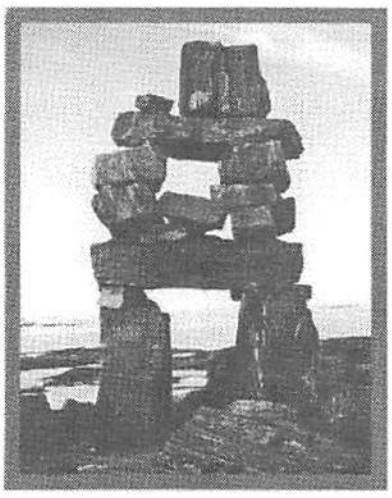
Original art and text from *The Inuksuk Book* by Mary Wallace. Published by Owl Books (Greey de Pencier Books). Distributed by Firefly Books Ltd. Text and illustrations © 1999 Mary Wallace. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

Sample Page

INUKSUK ANIRNILIK
INUKSUK WITH A SPIRIT

Sometimes inuksuit are built out of respect for a much-loved person, serving as a memorial to that person's spirit. One Inuit story tells of inuksuit that were built along the shore of a bay as memorials to women who drowned near there. It is told that many years ago, the men of an Inuit community went away hunting. While they were gone, the women went out onto the sea ice to fish for salmon. But spring was coming, and the winter ice was beginning to melt. Suddenly, the ice that the women were on broke from the shore and began to drift away. Only one woman dared to jump ashore. The rest were carried out to sea and drowned. When the men returned, their grief was great. They built an inuksuk for each drowned woman because they wanted the women's souls to be on dry land, and not out in the wet sea.

In traditional Inuit culture, shamans were people who had great magical powers and knowledge. As



This inuksuk is "sacred" or "given as a gift." The photographer gave it two matches and wished for good weather for the rest of his travels. His wish was granted.

Title:	***For Your Information: Information for Better Living Series***	
Publisher:	New Readers Press, Laubach Literacy of Canada, 1994	
Available:	(see back cover)	
ISBN:	*About Alcohol and Other Drugs*	*1-56420-015-9*
	About Aids	*1-56420-019-1*
	About Cancer	*1-56420-031-0*
	Getting Fit	*1-56420-023-x*
	The Self-Confident Child	*1-56420-033-7*
Price:	$12.75 each	
Reviewer:	Rena Neufeld, Instructor	

For Your Information: Information for Better Living and Quick and Easy Guides

The FYI series is a collection of short books which "seeks to provide useful information about a variety of topics. These topics all have something in common - they all affect people's lives in major ways." (Preface)

The FYI series includes many books, some of which are listed above. Another book in the series, *Eating Right,* was reviewed in Bulletin 15. Since then, the other books have proven themselves useful and popular. Also, three more books in a new series, *Quick and Easy Guides*, are now available. (see page 13). These are identical in layout and format to the FYI series, also proving to be popular with our readers.

These series are written in mostly lay terms. The writers have done a good job of making technical information available to adults with limited reading ability. The students and instructors liked the layout and print size and report that there is not too much information on a single page. The diagrams are simple line drawings with few labels. Each book has a glossary of terms; words in the text are in bold to indicate a glossary entry for that word.

The books contain from eight to twelve short chapters that may define the topic, examine risks, address how to get help, look at prevention issues, help the reader set goals, and/or discuss the role and concerns of society.

Most of the books also have "Life Stories." These are stories about ordinary people who are facing the problem defined in the book. The characters are introduced early in the book. At the end of the book, readers will find the conclusion of each life story and will be able to see how the information and knowledge gained in the book affected the lives of these people.

One caution about these series is that they are written in the United States; the hotline numbers and contact addresses given in the books are often not available in Canada. One instructor suggested pasting in the appropriate Canadian information before distributing the books.

Short reviews follow of five of the books.

Title:	*Quick and Easy Guides*	
Publisher:	New Readers Press, Laubach Literacy of Canada, 1997	
Available:	(see back cover)	
ISBN:	*Having a Baby*	*1-56853-032-3*
	Managing Stress	*1-56420-025-6*
	Women's Health	*1-56853-034-x*
Price:	$12.75 each	
Reviewer:	Rena Neufeld, Instructor	

For Your Information: Information for Better Living and Quick and Easy Guides

Managing Stress

This book is designed to help the reader meet three goals: understanding what stress is, identifying one's own stressors, and learning techniques to manage stress. The reader is given three suggestions to help meet these goals: talk about stress with a friend or family member, keep a journal, or set short-term goals. One student reviewer learned that "you can change your diet to relax your stress."

The Safe, Self-Confident Child

This book addresses issues of self-esteem and gives suggestions for good parental guidance and modelling. The importance of this in child-rearing is explained by pointing out that self-confident children tend to think for themselves, make safe and appropriate choices, solve problems, and learn good values. One student reviewer said, "I have finished to the book because I am the mother of a 3 year-old, and it can help me out with my daughter. Part 2 is interesting to me because I hope to raise my daughter with good self-confidence."

About Aids

Rachel from Cowichan says, "They explain how people get AIDS and stuff. They explain to be careful with your sex partner and using a needle. They explain you can't get AIDS just by touching a person casually. You don't need to be scared of people with AIDS."

Women's Health

A student from Nanaimo says, "This is a good book for women of all ages. It starts with eating, exercise, how to get ready for a doctor's visit, breast cancer, depression, pms, and getting older."

About Cancer

This book is about reducing the risk of getting cancer. It also discusses early detection of cancer and describes common tests for cancer.

The instructors who used this book in their classrooms said that the students found the information useful when presented with some direction from the instructor and with classroom discussion. Some students found the book difficult to read on their own. Everyone said it was an excellent resource book to have in the classroom.

Taken from *A Quick and Easy Guide: Managing Stress*. Reproduced by permission of New Readers Press.

Sample Page

Robert has a bowl of cereal for dinner. Sometimes, he gets drunk with his father because there's nothing else to do.

Jon

Jon is a 52-year-old salesclerk. His wife just died of a heart attack. Jon can't stop thinking about her. Every day, he misses her. He worries about dying. He can't get the thought of it out of his mind.

Since his wife died, Jon has been working a lot of overtime. He thinks this will keep his mind off her death.

Jon smokes a lot more than before. He even smokes instead of eating.

He has let the apartment get in a real mess. He feels that there is no one to keep it clean for. He leaves dishes in the sink for days. He doesn't empty the ashtrays.

Jon's sister stopped by one Sunday. She couldn't believe the mess. She asked him what was going on. He seemed under stress. She suggested he ask his doctor for help in dealing with the stress.

Title:	***125 Ways to Be a Better Writer***
Author:	Paul F. Johnson
Publisher:	LinguiSystems, Inc., 1996
	2100 4th Ave. East Moline, IL USA 61244
	phone 1-800-776-4332 website: linguisystems.com
ISBN:	0-7606-0109-7
Price:	$48.95
Reviewer:	Richard Van Camp, Instructor

125 Ways to Be a Better Writer

Paul F. Johnson has created an excellent reproducible resource, for both student and instructor, that encourages students to communicate more effectively. These seven units cover everything from "Writing Better Sentences & Paragraphs" to the writing process (prewriting, revising, proofreading and even publishing tips). The book also includes exercises for students to express themselves through journals and poetry. Everyday writing is covered through personal letters, thank-you notes, business letters and e-mail exercises. Nonfiction writing is explored through writing reviews (CD's, movies, books, etc.), research papers, and personal essays. Fiction writing is explored through exercises such as "10 Ways to Plan and Develop Your Plot," "9 Ways to Create Memorable Characters," and "6 Ways to Create a Setting."

The text contains handouts, activity sheets, writing project topics, an appendix, and an answer key. Although the text states that the reading level is for the sixth grade and up, I showed it to Terryl Humchitt and Corrine Johnson in our Intermediate English class here at Heiltsuk College. Both students enjoyed the text immensely. Corrine found every chapter helpful, especially when it came to writing a book report. Terryl agreed. She found that she had completely forgotten what a book report expected of her and used the text as her guide. Terryl found the units that covered everyday writing, paragraphs, and essays were well-explained and easy to follow. She thought that students at the grade eight and nine reading levels would benefit the most from this text.

125 Ways to Be a Better Writer was also field-tested in School District 91 and was recommended as a reference for all levels of literacy with the following comments: "Excellent jumping off point for lessons in writing. Humorous exercises. Mostly geared to advanced students but ideas useful for all." Student responses were, "Useful," "I never knew that before," and "Good method of organizing."

This text is not only a useful addition to the classroom but also a reminder of how creative our lesson plans can be.

We are unable to print a sample page of this product, but the publishers offer a 100 percent money-back guarantee. A page of the book can be viewed on their website.

Title:	***Why Did It Happen To Me?***
Author:	Carla Frenchy
Publisher:	Malaspina University-College, 2000
Available:	The Reading and Writing Centre, Malaspina University-College, 222 Cowichan Way, Duncan, BC V9L 6P4 phone (250) 715-1488 fax (250) 746-3529
ISBN:	1-896886-18-3
Price:	$7.00
Reviewer:	Iris Strong, Instructor

Why Did It Happen To Me?

"Carla gets very bad news from her doctor. Something is wrong with the baby she is carrying. She turns to her family for help and advice, but she keeps asking, 'Why did it happen to me?'" (Back Cover)

This book is one of those gems that come from learners who find that writing, as Carla says, "took a lot of heaviness off [my] chest." The book is a straightforward telling of a hard time that has no magical happy ending.

The book is 26 pages long, many of them with clear black and white photographs. Very beginning readers can manage the book and more advanced readers are caught up in the story. One instructor used the book in an assessment with a new student, and the student didn't want to stop. Even in an assessment, she was too interested in the story to be willing to quit reading.

Marie from Nanaimo says, "I had something a little similar to hers in 1995 also...her book really touched me and to this day it still hurts, so ...I'm glad that someone else knows where I'm coming from."

A learner from White Rock writes, "That's some story. You can tell it's a true story. Makes you feel thankful of life. A good healing book for others to read. Anybody who's lost a child would read this and not feel so alone."

Finally, Angelina Beaudin from Victoria says, "It is full of courage, love and togetherness...Carla is an incredible woman for facing her difficult choice with courage, and for writing her story down for others to read."

Although the story ends on a sad note, "[Carla] wants people to know that, three years later, she and her boyfriend had a baby boy."

Why Did It Happen To Me can be used as class reading, with individuals, for sequencing exercises, for retelling the story through the pictures, or as a writing start. Another possibility would be to write a letter to Carla about her book.

From *Why Did It Happen To Me?* by Carla Frenchy. Reproduced by permission of Malaspina University-College.

Sample Page

My dad said, "If you see your daughter, having her in your arms will be too hard for you because you will see what she looks like. You will never forget. You will be just crying for her all the time."

7

Title:	*Go With The Flo*
Authors:	Eva Baer, Naomi Guttman, Kathe Lieber, Karin Montin, Emil Sher, Christine York
Publisher:	RECLAIM, 1987 Reading Council for Literacy Advance in Montreal 3449 University St., Montreal, QC H3A 2A8 phone (514) 369-7835 fax (514) 369-7837
Price:	$5.00
Reviewer:	Ruth Chambers, Instructor

Go With The Flo

Go With the Flo is a fifty-page short story with fourteen easy-to-read chapters. The story is about a middle-aged woman, Flo, who works nights as an office cleaner. She is tired of working nights because she wants to be at home with her family in the evenings. She decides to find a day job so that she can go to school at night and eventually get a job where she does not have to work nights. After many weeks of searching, she finds a steady job as a daytime house cleaner that allows her to return to school. Flo returns to school and the reader learns of her fears and rewards in the classroom. The story ends with Flo getting a promotion to supervisor, thus fostering the idea that schooling improves one's life.

This book is appealing to newer readers because of its small size, double-spaced print, simple sentence structure, and easy vocabulary. Student reactions to *Go With the Flo* are very positive. They find it enjoyable to read, interesting, and easy to relate to. One student reviewer said, "It isn't easy going back to school. This book is a lot like my story." The students like the happy, but realistic ending, with one student saying the ending gives "positive reinforcement" to going back to school.

Another attractive feature of *Go With the Flo* is that each chapter forms an independent part of the overall story, so students can read as few or as many chapters at one sitting as they like. The chapters touch on many topical issues, such as husbands' and wives' roles, teenagers' roles, poor working conditions, job searches, and age discrimination. These topics act as great discussion starters, and they could be broadened into larger units if desired. In addition, the issues are great catalysts for writing activities like response and opinion paragraphs.

Overall, I think *Go With the Flo* would be a great addition to any literacy library.

From *Go With The Flo* by Eva Baer, Naomi Guttman, Kathe Lieber, Karin Montin, Emil Sher, Christine York. Reproduced by permission of RECLAIM.

Sample Page

"Could you please turn it down?" Flo said to Leo. "I can't hear myself think!"

Leo turned off the TV and came into Robert's room.

"What's the big deal?" he asked. "It's just a test. Why are you so nervous?"

"It is a big deal to me," said Flo.

"That's all you care about these days, Flo. School, school, school. When was the last time we went to the movies?"

Flo looked at Leo. She knew he didn't understand.

"Leo, this is important to me. Maybe I'm not a genius, but I want to get my high school diploma. I want to do well. Maybe one day I'll be able to get an even better job. Why can't you leave me alone a little?"

"You shouldn't be working all day, anyway. The kids miss you. You don't even care about them! You don't care about me!" Leo was shouting.

Flo was angry. "Why do I always have to look after everyone?" she asked. "Maybe you should watch less TV."

Leo slammed the door. He slept in the living room that night. Flo stayed awake for a long time. Now she wasn't nervous about her test. She was worried about her marriage.

Title:	*Know It All Readers:* A series including *Volcanoes and other Natural Disasters*; *Secrets of the Mummies* and *Beastly Tales: Yeti, Bigfoot and the Loch Ness Monster*		
Author:	Harriet Griffey (*Volcanoes and Secrets of the Mummies*); Malcolm Yorke (*Beastly Tales*)		
Publisher:	DK Publishing / H.B. Fenn and Company Ltd., 1998		
Available:	(see back cover)		
ISBN:	*Volcanoes*	$6.25	1-55168-151-x
	Secrets of the Mummies	$6.25	1-55168-200-1
	Beastly Tales	$6.25	1-55168-149-8
Reviewer:	Nancy Ross, Instructor		

Know It All Readers

These books are easy readers with interesting non-fictional topics: natural disasters, mummies, and mysterious creatures. Because these subjects are so fascinating to many adults, students who have never done any previous reading in science will likely wish to read these books. They are rewarded with fairly large print and many wonderful, full-coloured illustrations and photographs to provide both interest and contextual clues to the accompanying text. In addition, there is an enriched vocabulary list in each reader, with easy, short explanations.

Volcanoes and Other Natural Disasters discusses famous and not-so-famous earthquakes, avalanches, bushfires, erupting volcanoes, tidal waves, flash floods, and hurricanes. The book is organized with short articles that tell about a particular natural disaster that has occurred in history: for example, it includes the story of Pompeii, the San Francisco earthquake, and the 1887 flooding of China's Great Plain.

Beastly Tales details the folklore and fact surrounding some of the world's most famous mysterious creatures: the Yeti, or Abominable Snowman; Bigfoot; and the Loch Ness Monster. *Secrets of the Mummies* goes into detail about Egyptian, Incan, and Sicilian mummies, and modern examples of mummification are discussed.

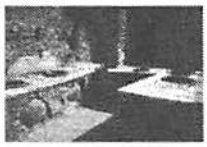
The reading levels of the *Know It All Readers* are given as Grades 1 to 4; unfortunately for adult readers, these levels are printed right on the front cover of each book. However, I found that my students didn't appear to notice or be bothered by this, and other instructors recommend that one could easily cover these reading levels with stickers.

I liked these books for their high-interest value and their ease of reading. Adult students who are struggling readers will find that the pictures and the fascinating details keep them reading to the end. I also believe that these books are appropriate for a wide range of reading abilities because they don't look like "easy readers." Because of the factual nature of the material, and the maturity of the illustrations, even more advanced readers will find the material appealing, interesting, and appropriate.

From *Know It All Readers: Volcanoes and other Natural Disasters* by Harriet Griffey. Reproduced by permission of DK Publishing/H.B. Fenn and Company Ltd.

Sample Page

Vesuvius Farmers grew crops on Vesuvius. They had no reason to fear the volcano – it had been quiet for 800 years.



Take-out At outdoor cafes, snacks were served from bowls sunk into the counter

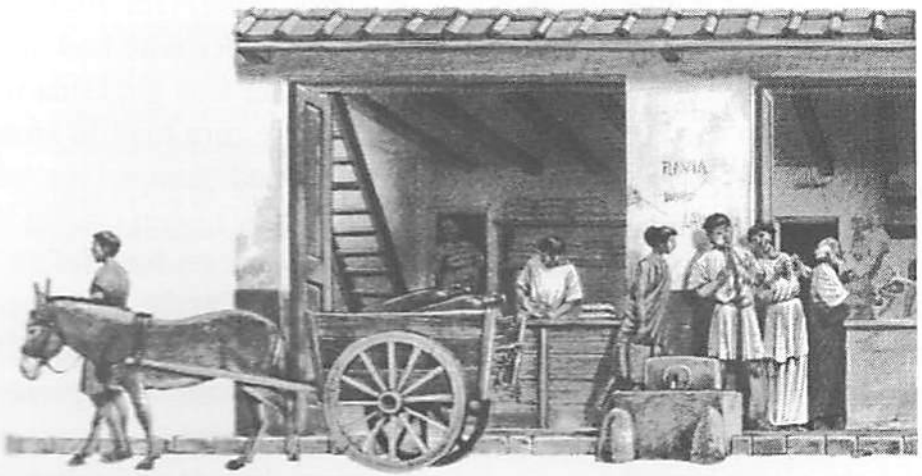
Vesuvius erupts!

ITALY, AD 79

It was a scorching-hot morning. At the foot of Mount Vesuvius, an inactive volcano in southern Italy, the Roman town of Pompeii baked in the August sunshine.

Despite the heat, Pompeii's streets and markets were bustling. The smell of fresh bread from bakers' ovens filled the air, and traveling musicians entertained the shoppers.

At a take-out restaurant, two women ordered snacks for their children. A man tied his dog to the counter and waited to be served.



Title:	***Inside Out: A Teacher's Guide to Corrections and Conditional Release.***
Produced by:	Documentary Productions Ltd., 1999
Available:	Correctional Services of Canada Communications and Consultation Sector 340 Laurier Ave West, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0P9 fax (613) 947-0091
Price:	The video can be borrowed for free by any group from Correctional Services of Canada
Reviewer:	Debbie Booth-Johnson, Instructor

Inside Out

Inside Out is a teaching package that includes a 45-minute video called "*A Test of Justice*," the teacher's guide, 14 student handouts, and 14 overhead masters. This package is intended to provide students with a comprehensive view of our current justice system. The part of the kit that most of our field-testers used was the video that follows an offender from the time he commits his crime until he is finally released back into the community on day parole. As the information is presented, the viewers are asked to pause and decide how they view the offence committed, the type of charges laid, the sentencing that followed, and the eventual release of the individual back into the community. The decisions made by the viewers are then compared to the actual case history from 20 years ago and what would happen in our justice system today.

The students and instructors who watched the video were generally very positive about the information presented. They felt that it helped to dispel some of the myths we have about how the correctional system operates. To quote one of the students, "The video brought together the whole process of how a prison works and how prisoners work within the walls." Some students recognized the limitations of this presentation by Corrections Canada as not only information for the public about the justice system, but also as promotional material for the correctional service. This is a valid observation, and the package presents an excellent opportunity for critical thinking and discussion about biases in presentations.

The acting in the video was believable. One student felt sad for the bank teller who had the gun in her face; another was glad that the offender was able to turn his life around. His comment: "He had changed his whole lifestyle...If he hadn't been caught he would probably be in prison for life" (for some other crime). On the other hand, some learners were concerned about the "easy" life behind bars. This presents another opportunity to discuss important issues of punishment and rehabilitation.

The Bulletin's Board

From Dark to Light: Regaining a Caring Community, Status of Women Council of the N.W.T., $100. Distributed by Literacy Services of Canada (see back cover). *From Dark to Light* consists of seven booklets, each about 45 pages long: "Healthy Relationships," "Sexual Assault," "Spousal Abuse," "Child Sexual Abuse," "Parenting Skills," "Abusive Men Support Group," and "Facilitator Book." The booklets were created for and by community people working to end violence and build a healthier community. Each workbook consists of an easy-to-read introduction to the topic, some sample schedules for doing the work, and about 15 activities. Each activity is carefully laid out and includes the time it would take, when to use it, step-by-step instructions, the handouts needed, and some tips to make the activity work. All parts of the books may be photocopied. At the very least, this kit contains many invaluable activities on difficult topics. At most, there are whole programs here that could be used in some literacy classrooms.

War Amps Videos

"The purpose of the War Amps videos is to raise awareness about...the abilities of amputees, child safety, Canada's military history, and the horrors of war." These videos are loaned out free of charge or may be purchased. The list of 50 videos is available from The War Amps, Key Tag Service, 1 Maybrook Drive, Scarborough, ON, M1V 5K9 or www.waramps.ca/

National Adult Literacy Database is a wonderful service for literacy work in Canada. You will find literacy magazines from across Canada, information about conferences, annotated lists of relevant software, student writing and much, much more.
The *Bulletin* is at: www.nald.ca/bulletin.htm

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Literacy Materials Committee
c/o Evelyn Battell
222 Cowichan Way
Duncan, BC V9L 6P4
email: battelle@mala.bc.ca
fax (250) 746-3529 phone (250) 746-3500

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I have a large apology to make to Debbie Booth-Johnson who wrote the review in *Bulletin 21* of *Very Easy True Stories*. She was not credited! Sorry Debbie.

From Page 20: DK Publishing / H.B. Fenn and Company Ltd., 34 Nixon Road, Bolton, ON L7E 1W2, phone (905) 468-7558 fax (905) 951-6601, www.hbfenn.com
From Page 12 and 13: New Readers Press, Laubach Literacy of Canada, 70 Crown St., Ste 225, Saint John, NB M3C 2T8, phone 1-800-263-9965 fax (416) 447-2551
From Page 23: Literacy Services of Canada, PO Box 52192, Edmonton, AB, T6G 2T5, phone (780) 413-6491 fax (780) 413-6582